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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7140
INFO RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 1724
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY 1643
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 0756
RUEHLL/AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY 0479
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY 1787
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY 1752
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 2212
RUEHPG/AMEMBASSY PRAGUE PRIORITY 0273
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY 0328
RUEHROV/AMEMBASSY VATICAN PRIORITY 0591
RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 2141
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 8323
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 2279
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY 4478

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/06/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [EU](#) [VE](#) [IT](#)
SUBJECT: ITALY SHARES USG VENEZUELA CONCERNS, EU WORKING ON
APPROACH

REF: STATE 12181

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor David D. Pearce for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Poloff delivered reftel demarche February 6 to MFA South America Office Director Francesco Talo and Desk Officer Paolo Campanini, urging Italy to raise the issue of Radio Caracas Television (RCTV) privately and publicly with the Venezuelan government. Talo said Italy shared our concerns that RCTV's license would not be renewed, and about President Chavez's other efforts to consolidate power. According to Talo, many EU countries had expressed concern and the EU was working on an approach. Brussels had requested a report from EU heads of mission in Caracas and, once the report was complete, the EU would make a decision on how to proceed. The EU would voice its concerns to Venezuela, Talo said, and Italy would work within the EU to this end.

2. (C) Talo pointed out that the EU had achieved some small measure of success with the pressure it had put on the GOV in response to the new Venezuela NGO law. He wondered why the U.S. had focused its efforts on specific cases like RCTV (and Sumate earlier) in lieu of raising general concerns about Chavez's recent actions.

3. (C) The GOI continued to be concerned about kidnapping of Italian nationals, with new cases reported every month, and Talo noted Italy had to consider the safety of its citizens when considering its policy toward Venezuela. Italian MFA Under Secretary for Latin America Donato Di Santo had traveled to practically every country in the Americas except Venezuela. Talo said Di Santo would eventually visit Caracas as well, although nothing had been scheduled yet. Talo said Italy hoped to stay in close contact with the U.S. on Venezuela issues.
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